



Department of Justice

United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott
Eastern District of California

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THREE DRUG TRAFFICKING ORGANIZATIONS DISMANTLED FROM TOP TO BOTTOM

SACRAMENTO, Calif.—United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that a federal grand jury returned four multiple-count indictments charging 28 people, including JORGE REYES, 29; ADAM REYES, 37; JUAN ALVAREZ, 30; DAVID NAVARRO, 37; MAJEID BAJMANLO, 28; STEVEN LOPEZ, 37; JUAN RIZO, 29; THOMAS GARCIA, 33; SARAH LANCASTER, 29; ASHLEY RYMER, 23; VICTOR CEJA, 22; KHAMSOU SIDA, 30; KEOUDONE PHAOUTHOU, 36; KOUTKEO THI, 32; ZI LEI, 38; DE YANG, 24; and KOMALLA XAYADETH, 36, all of Sacramento, Calif., and RUBEN OLSEN, 30, JOHN LI, 36; SON NGUYEN, 38; THANH NGUYEN, 33; and TING THAVISAK, 35, all of Elk Grove, Calif., and JUAN ABARCA-CATALAN, 40, and TUY NGUYEN, 23, both of Vallejo, Calif., JOSHUA LIKE, 20, of Anchorage, Alaska, BOUNTHAVEE NERASIN, 43, of Holland, Mich., PAMOUEANE PAN PHONEPHACKDY, 33, of Holland, Mich., and VY YOU, 31, of Zeeland Mich., with various felony narcotics charges, including, but not limited to, conspiracy to distribute over 500 grams of a mixture containing methamphetamine, conspiracy to distribute over 50 grams of pure methamphetamine, conspiracy to distribute MDMA (better known as “Ecstasy”), conspiracy to distribute over 100 kilograms of marijuana, and conspiracy to manufacture over 1000 marijuana plants. JOHN LI was also charged with being a felon in possession of a firearm.

On August 7, 2008, a federal grand jury returned a related two-count indictment charging five other people, PHILIP GARCIA, 29, of West Sacramento, Calif.; MICHAEL JOSEPH, 30, of Marysville, Calif.; LORETTA CANHAM, 45, of Sacramento, Calif.; DAVID FORKNER, 38, of North San Juan, Calif.; and STEVEN TALBOT, 47, of Penn Valley, Calif. with a conspiracy to distribute over 500 grams of methamphetamine.

This case is the product of an extensive investigation by the Sacramento High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (“HIDTA”) Task Force. HIDTA is a specialized and federally funded narcotic task force comprised primarily of detectives from the Sacramento County Sheriff’s Department, and also includes investigators from the Drug Enforcement Administration (“DEA”), Sacramento Police Department, Folsom Police Department, and the Sacramento County Probation Department. During this investigation, HIDTA worked closely with other bureaus of the Sacramento County Sheriff’s Department, including the California Multi-jurisdictional Methamphetamine Enforcement Team (“Cal-MMET”), the Gang Suppression Unit, Narcotics Suppression Unit, and the Special Enforcement Detail (SWAT). A similar HIDTA Task Force from Milwaukee, Wis., as well as the DEA, the Nevada County Sheriff’s Department, the Yuba and Sutter County Narcotics Enforcement Team (NET-5), the Placer County Sheriff’s Department’s Special Investigations Unit, the Illinois State Police, and the Anchorage Police Department provided significant support to the Sacramento HIDTA throughout the investigation.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Michael M. Beckwith, who is prosecuting the cases, these five indictments charge 33 members of three separate drug trafficking organizations for their efforts to distribute methamphetamine, MDMA, and marijuana throughout the Central Valley of California and other states, including Wisconsin, Michigan,

Illinois, and Alaska. Investigators seized over four pounds of methamphetamine, seven pounds of MDMA (over 13,000) pills, over 1350 marijuana plants, and over \$75,000 in cash. They also seized body armor and 11 firearms, including a Tech-9 machine pistol.

Captain Elizabeth Kelly, of the Sacramento County Sheriff's Department, said, "This operation was an excellent example of how the use of narcotic task forces and inter-agency cooperation can be an effective tool in the dismantling of major drug trafficking organizations. Due to the hard work of the men and women of HITDA, Cal-MMET, DEA, and the US Attorney's Office, we can make significant progress in decreasing the distribution of methamphetamine and other harmful drugs."

"This string of indictments strike a serious blow to major methamphetamine trafficking in the Sacramento region and beyond," stated U.S. Attorney Scott.

The maximum statutory penalty for conspiring to distribute over 500 grams of a mixture containing methamphetamine, or over 50 grams of pure meth, or to manufacture over 1,000 marijuana plants is life in prison with a 10-year mandatory minimum sentence. The maximum statutory penalty for conspiring to distribute over 100 kilograms of marijuana is 40 years in prison with a five-year mandatory minimum sentence, and the maximum statutory penalty for conspiring to distribute MDMA is 20 years in prison. The actual sentence, however, will be determined at the discretion of the court after consideration of the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, which take into account a number of variables and any applicable statutory sentencing factors.

The charges are only allegations and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

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